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A SERMON

Upon the Late Dreadful

STORM:

Preach'd in the Parish Church of

St. *Andrew's Holborn*,

November 28, 1704.

By *Tho. Mangingham*, D. D.
Rector of St. *Andrew's Holborn*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to Her MAJESTY.

Publish'd at the Request of some of the Inhabitants.

LONDON,
Printed for *Jacob Tonson*, within *Grays-Inn* Gate, next *Grays-Inn* Lane. 1704.

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Preached in the Parish Church of

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November 26. 1703.

BRITISH MUSEUM

By Tho. Tillotson, D. D.

Rector of St. Andrew's Holborn, and Chaplain

in Ordinary to Her Majesty.

Printed for John Nicholson, within Temple-Bar, and
Sam. Crouch, Corn-hill, 1704.

Mr. *Herbert*'s Country Parſon, Chap. VII.

THE Miniſter, *in his* Preaching, *ſerves himſelf of the Judgments of God, as of thoſe of Ancient Times, ſo eſpecially of the late ones; and thoſe moſt, which are neareſt to his Pariſh; for People are very attentive at ſuch Diſcourſes, and think it behoves them to be ſo, when God is ſo near them, and even over their Heads.*

Mr. Herbert's Country Parson.
Chap. VII.

THE Minister, in his Preaching, perswades himself of the Judgments of God, as of that of Antecedent Times, so especially of the last ones; and those most, which are most of all to his Parish: For People are very attentive to Discourses, most think it believes them to be so, unless God is so sure them, and even over their Heads.

A

SERMON

Preach'd upon the Late

STORM, &c.

ISAIAH XXVI. 9.

When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs.

THESE Words may be conſider'd, either as an *Inſtruction* of the Prophet, pointing out our Duty; or as an *Obſervation* that generally holds, but not always.

In my Handling of them at this Time, I ſhall beg Leave to proceed in this Method.

I. To ſhew, That the *Judgments* of God are deſign'd by Him, and in their own Nature do tend, to teach the Inhabitants of the World true *Repentance* and *Righteouſneſs*.

II. To enquire, Whether they do *always* produce this Effect.

III. To Exhort you to learn *Righteouſneſs* from the *preſent Judgments* of God.

I. I ſhall ſhew, That the *Judgments* of God are deſign'd by Him, and in their own Nature do tend, to teach the Inhabitants of the World true *Repentance* and *Righteouſneſs*.

Tho' God Almighty has appointed a Time, in which He will judge the

the whole World by Him whom He has raiſed up, and exalted above all Principalities and Dominions, and to whom He has committed all Authority and Judgment; yet, notwithſtanding that great Day of Retributions, there are in the mean time ſuch Temporal Judgments diſpens'd in the Earth, as are neceſſary for the good Government of the World.

The End of all Things here below ſeems to many ſuch a diſtant Proſpect, and the Terror of the final Judgment ſeems ſo remote an Argument, that few would govern their Lives by the Expectation of that Day, unleſs their Faith were ſometimes quicken'd by intermediate Judgments, or by ſuch extraor-

dinary Interpositions of Providence, as shall constrain Men to say with the *Psalmist*, *Verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth.*

Famines, and Pestilences, and Fires, and Inundations, and Wars, and Earth-Quakes, and *Storms*, and *Tempests*, and such like publick Calamities, where ever they happen, are as so many Heralds sent forth to Proclaim the Almighty to be the *Governor* and *Judge* of the World, and to make a new Promulgation of those Truths which He has already reveal'd.

For Prosperity, or a long Tract of successful Events, is apt to breed a Forgetfulness of God, and to fill the Imagination with vain Opinions concerning *Chance* and *Nature*, and

a *necessary* Train of Causes; and besides, it is apt to weaken the Restraints of Conscience and Discipline, to remit the Authority of Virtue, and to give a speedy Growth to the Vices of *Sloathfulness* and *Luxury*; but the Judgments of God awaken Men to right Apprehensions of Things, to the Acknowledgment of an over-ruling Power, to a Review of their Actions according to those Laws and Measures which the Divine Wisdom has prescrib'd, to a general Reformation of Manners, and to a greater Concern for *Universal Righteousness*: For how can these and such like Inferences be well avoided, when it plainly appears how very much God himself is concern'd to make new Impressions of

His

His *Power* and *Juſtice* on the Minds of Men?

When the Wickedneſs of Mankind encreaſes, it provokes God to make uſe of the harſher Methods of His Providence, that He may put a new Spirit of Religious Fear into the Hearts of all thoſe who are willing to conſider *wiſely* the *Operations* of the Lord.

God would lead us in a more gentle way, but our Sins will not permit Him; we break out from His ordinary Government, and then He overtakes us with His *Judgments*; we will not hearken to the Voice of Conſcience, and that obliges Him to ſpeak *Louder* to us in Terrors and Amazements; we grow Rebellious and Unruly, and then

He

He Arms the Creatures againſt us, and commits us to the *Fury* of the *Elements*; we ſuffer our *Paſſions* to grow ſo Imperious, that Reaſon, and Wiſdom, and good Counſel cannot be hearken'd to, and then we tempt Him to deliver us up to our own *Mutual Rage*, and to make us a moſt *ſevere Judgment* to one another!

But ſtill, the main *Deſign* of God is not ſo much to *Deſtroy* as to *Build* up; not to root out, but to reform the Generations of the World; for that the Judgments of God do in their own Nature tend to teach Men true Repentance and Righteouſneſs, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew more diſtinctly by theſe *Two* Particulars.

Firſt, Becauſe (as I have already hinted)

hinted) they are apt to work on our Minds a ſtronger Conviction of the *Providence* of God. And,

Secondly, Becauſe they moſt powerfully awaken in us the Thoughts of the *Great Day of Judgment*.

Firſt, The Judgments of God do in their own Nature tend to teach Men true Repentance and Righteouſneſs, by working on their Minds a ſtronger Conviction of the *Providence* of God.

If all Things went on in an Uniform Courſe, Men would be tempted to think that the World were nothing but a *Complicated Machine*, left to its own Natural Motions, and not ſubjected to any wiſe and provident Power; but when they ſee how its *Seaſons* and *Elements* are often chang-

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ed for the Punishment of Man, they cannot but acknowledge that the World is under the Government of an Omnipotent and *Free Agent*, who disposes of Natural Causes in such a manner, as that they may be the Rewards and Punishments of *Moral* Virtues and Defects.

So likewise if Human Affairs were always carry'd on in a smooth and equal Course, according to the Methods of common Prudence; Men would be ready to sacrifice to their own Nets, and to consider but little of any higher Power than their own: But when they find their Designs perplex'd with unexpected Difficulties, and that Things go contrary sometimes to the most likely Rules of Human Wisdom; then they look up and Adore a Superior Power, who has reserv'd

to himself the Disposal of all Events.

Ease, and Quiet, and Plenty, and a long Prosperity are Blessings, which Human Nature is apt to surfeit with, and which often turn into Corruption and Diseases. Tho they beluch indulgences as all Men covet, yet they are such as many cannot long thrive under, they are too luxurious a Diet to be constantly us'd; they breed vain Opinions, fond Desires, and too delicate a Concern for the Things of this Life; so that Judgments are as necessary for a pamper'd World, as Physick for a surfeited Body; they purge away the long Collection of vicious Humours, and bring Mankind to a good State and Temper again.

A long Series of flourishing Times is generally attended with a strange

Degeneracy of Manners and Piety; a great deal of Leisure makes an Age supine, doathful, or pestilently witty; one Part stagnates in sensual Pleasure, and another is proud of Inventing the most extravagant Conceits in Politicks and Religion. What a multitude of *Irreligious Fancies* have been spread about this Nation in a few Years! Every young Person, who is resolv'd to indulge himself in *Sensuality*, pretends presently to some very *particular way* of Reasoning, and becomes fond of certain Notions and Principles, that may give his Mind some Ease under all that Voluptuousness which he is inclin'd to, because the Duties of Christianity are too strict for his Practice, therefore he is offended with the *Mysteries* of it, because the Laws of *Holiness* are contrary to his In-

clinations, therefore he cannot tell what to make of his *Creed*; he has so provok'd the *Justice* of God by his Sins, that he had much rather doubt of His *Existence*, than lye under the Apprehensions of His Vengeance; he has so abus'd his Nature by a Brutish way of Living, that he is as sick of the Thoughts of his *Immortality*, as a poor Nobleman is of his Honour; and would willingly wave that *Prerogative*, which only upbraids his *Degenerate Condition*.

But what wretched stuff would all *Prophaneness* appear, if God should arise to Vindicate His own Honour by a *Succession* of most Terrible Judgments amongst us? Who would keep Company with an Atheist, when the *Indignation* of the Almighty is heard in such *Storms* throughout the Land? Were that

that Consternation we so lately felt kept up, and renew'd upon our Minds, we should soon avoid all Society with the prophane Crew, as the Herd keep off the wounded Deer; all sober People would no more endure to hear Men abuse Religion and the Holy Scriptures, than they would tarry to hear a Buffoon make Jests, when they were seriously told that their *Houses* were on Fire; or when they were in dread that the next *Wind* might *blow* them down upon their Heads.

Irreligious Opinions, and loose Principles can neither support any, nor be themselves supported, under any grievous Calamities: They are sometimes the poor Diversion of those who live at ease; but when the Judgments of God have once awaken'd the Conscience, all those extravagant Dreams

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and Deluſions diſappear, and the *Natural Teſtimony* of the Mind breaks forth, that *verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, doubtleſs there is a God that judgeth the Earth*, Pſal. 58. 10. which may lead us to the

Second Particular, That the preſent Judgments of God do in their own nature tend to teach Men true *Repentance* and *Righteouſneſs*, becauſe they moſt powerfully awaken in them the thoughts of the *Great Day of Judgment*.

The *Day of Judgment* is deſcrib'd in the Holy Scriptures in a very terrible and aſtoniſhing manner, by Confuſion of the *Elements*, by the *Convulſions* of Nature, and by all that *Apparatus* or *Scene* of Terror, that either we have known, or can imagin, ay, and by much *greater* than we are able to imagin. For tho' the Imagination be a Faculty

that

that is apt to *exceed* in its Representations of things, yet here it is defective; it cannot take in all the *Idea*, nor conceive all the *Circumstances* of the *Horror*, that is either to *forerun*, or to *conclude* that *Great Day*. But then the *Natural Dread* of God, Vengeance being closely woven into the very Hearts of Mankind, and the Scriptures having prepossess'd our Minds with such Expectations, when ever we hear the *Voice* of God speaking *Loud* to us in any present Judgment, it cannot but awaken in us some of the *Images* of what we must expect at the *great* Judgment of all; and the Thoughts of that Day, if any thing, will work strongly upon our Souls, melt them down into Contrition and Repentance, and fill us with Resolutions of practising all manner of *Righteousness* for the time to come.

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The Collect for the Day (the 1st in *Advent*) has join'd the *first Coming* of Christ in all *Humility*, with His *second Coming* in His *Glorious Majesty, to judge both the Quick and Dead*; that they who are but little mov'd with the *still Voice* of His *Incarnation*, may be wrought upon by the most amazing *Terrors* of the Lord, when they consider Him as coming to Judge the World: For seeing all things shall then be *dissolv'd*, surely the Hearts of Men should be *so* now; their present Apprehensions should effect that in their own Breasts now, which the *Immediate Power* of God will then effect in the other Parts of the Creation.

Present Judgments therefore are apt to give Men a most powerful Conviction of the *Great* and *Last Judgment*; and That, when duly weigh'd, is one

of

of the most cogent Arguments to *Universal Righteousness*; the Consideration that we act in the sight of *Him*, who *seeth* and *judgeth* all Things, lays a *great Necessity* upon us of being Good and Virtuous. *Magna vobis est, si dissimulare non vultis, Necessitas indicta probitatis, cùm inter oculos agitat Judicis cuncta cernentis.* Boeth. Consol. Phil. conclusio.

But let us Enquire in the II. Place, Whether the *Judgments* of God do *always* produce this Effect.

And here Experience acquaints us, that there is something in the *Corruption* and *acquir'd Wickedness* of some Mens Hearts, that baffles this as well as other Methods of God's dealing with them; they are so far from Repenting, and learning Righteousness by the Corrections of God, that they many

times add *Impiety* to their *Immoralities*, and deny that He concerns Himself in the Government of the World.

If at any time such Persons have some *Terror* upon them, yet it presently goes off, and appears to them no more than a *frightful Dream*; they may feel perhaps a little Disorder of Spirit at the first Concussion, but then their *prophane Temper* makes Head again, and they soon return to their wonted Thoughts and Ways: So that the *Instruction* which the *Judgments* should have deeply impress'd, goes off with the Surprize; and if the *Storm* and *Tempest* causes their Consciences to cast up some of its *Mire* and *Dirt*, all that *Filthiness* subsides and sinks again, and they are as Vicious at the *Bottom* as ever.

Nay, if a Judgment *continue* for some time, it often loses its Effect with

some by its very *Continuance*; for they presently learn to behold it without much Consternation, and in a little time, without any Concern; it grows too familiar to have much Operation upon them, and when it does not remove, to be sure it increases the Disease. A most Tragical Relation of a People prodigiously harden'd by the *continued* Judgments of God, may be read at large in the Sixth Book of *Salvian*'s Treatise concerning *God's Government of the World*.

Now tho' such *perverse* Behaviour under Divine Judgments, be directly contrary to God's Designs, yet He permits it, for the Trial of Mens Hearts in this Life; and this Permission of His most strongly argues the *Necessity* of an After-reckoning, wherein the Justice of God will at last make up for

all the *Permissions* of His Providence, and for all the *Forbearances* of His Mercy.

But still, these Obstinate and Harden'd Tempers, are such Monsters in the Kingdom of Providence and Grace, that we hope there are but very few of them, and that the generality are better dispos'd, so dispos'd as to learn *Righteousness*, when ever the *Judgments of the Lord are in the Earth*. Which in the

III. And Last Place I shall *Exhort* you to do.

In what ever *Language* God is pleas'd to speak unto us, let us be ever ready to attend His Voice: If He be pleas'd to convince us more fully of His Majesty, His Sovereign Power and Holiness, as He did *Job*, by speaking to us out of the *Whirlwind*, let it bring us to the same submissive Behaviour as

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it did him, *viz.* to *abhor our ſelves in Duſt and Aſhes*. When our Hearts are, by God's Judgments, like *melting Wax* within us, then let us be ready to receive the cleareſt Impreſſions of His moſt Holy Will and Pleaſure, that we may be thus *ſeal'd* unto the Day of the Lord: And when at the *chiding* of *the Lord, at the blaſting of the Breath of His Diſpleaſure, the very Foundations of the World are diſcover'd*; let it at the ſame time diſcover the very Bottom of our Conſciences too; let it deſcend into the deepeſt Receſſes thereof, and call to Mind our moſt *ſecret Sins*.

When Terror comes flying upon the Wings of the Wind, and *Storms* are ſo prodigiouſly fierce and laſting, as if Legions of *Deſtroying Angels* were mingled amongſt them; then ſhould we ſend our Prayers to Heaven with a

mighty

mighty Force too; and make the Meſſengers for our Protection ſwifter than thoſe, which threaten our Deſtruction: We ſhould earneſtly apply to *Him*, who ſits above the Floods, above the Atmoſphere, above all the Region of the Meteors, and who with a Word rebukes the *Winds*, and ſtrait they ceaſe.

But tho' they *ceaſe*, yet let our *Righteouſneſs* ſtill go on; let it increaſe like the Light, more and more unto a perfect Day: Let the *Agitations* which we lately felt make way for our Virtuous Reſolutions to ſink deeper into all our Hearts; that we may be the more *Eſtabliſh'd* in Faith and Goodneſs, by being ſo Terribly *Shaken*.

There is one Part of *Righteouſneſs* which methinks the *late Judgment* of God

God should *especially* recommend to you all; and that is the constant Duty of *Family-Prayer* and Devotion. If we had not known it before, we have been now sufficiently taught what *Perils* and Accidents we are all expos'd to in the *Night*; how that our *Beds* may soon be crush'd into so many *Graves*, and we may be quickly bury'd in the Ruins of that which we took for our secureſt Shelter.

Let us therefore never fail of calling upon God with our *Families*, before ever we commit our ſelves to that Bodily Reſt, from which perhaps we may never awake, 'till the General Reſurrection.

Let us implore the Almighty, that His Good Angels may pitch their Tents about us; that His Providence may be our ſafe Protection; and that we

we may be kept from all the Dangers of the Night by Him, who never *ſlumbers* nor *ſleeps*.

This, this is the way, to keep off Judgments, or to turn them into Mercies.

And if we be ready to practiſe but one Part more of *Righteouſneſs*, that of *ſhewing Mercy to the Poor*, to which I ſo largely Exhorted you the laſt Sunday; then may we be ſaid in ſome meaſure to have learn'd that *Leſſon*, which God's *Judgments* are deſign'd to *Teach* us; and which His *Gracious Providence* hath both *Spar'd*, and *Enabled* us to perform.

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be all Honour, Glory, Power, Praiſe, and Thankſgiving, both now and evermore. Amen.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM